



Lambda Letters Project

Lavender Library, Archives
and Cultural Exchange
Sacramento, CA
33775

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LLP Treasurer Issues Donation Challenge

By Boyce Hinman, Chief Lobbyist

At our board meeting on May 3, Lambda Letters' treasurer, Mike Butler, issued a challenge. He personally pledged to match any single donation of \$1,000 or any three donations of \$333 each.

Like many organizations during the current economic turndown, the Lambda Letters Project has struggled to find the necessary donations and grants to finance its successful, yet extensive, lobbying activities. Because these activities are growing rapidly (see article to the right), we need additional funds to cover the costs of our work on behalf of the community. The Lambda Letters board discussed this issue at length at its May meeting and made some key decisions to meet the challenge.

First it was decided that board members would seek to raise an average of \$2,700 more each month than called for by the budget. Then Mike Butler issued his donator's challenge.

The board also decided that Lambda Letters would join the Association of Fundraising Professionals (AFP), a standard-bearer for professional fundraising. The AFP has monthly meetings with fundraising semi-

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Lambda Letters Sets Sizzling Pace

By Boyce Hinman, Chief Lobbyist

In just the first four months of 2003 Lambda Letters delivered over 66,000 letters and e-mail messages to elected officials. This is about 12,000 more than we delivered at the same time last year. You signed these letters and e-mails, which means your part in our work is what makes it all possible. You should take a bow. Thank you so much for your support.

It's worth noting that last year we delivered almost 217,000 letters and e-mails to elected officials. Since we are already ahead of schedule this year, it's apparent that we will deliver more than that this year, perhaps much more. And last year's total was well above any prior year; for example, in 2001 we delivered only 140,000 letters and messages.

Those letters do matter! Here are some comments from legislators about the work that you and we do together:

"Lambda Letters' activities have often been a crucial factor in determining whether a particular bill passes or fails." (Senator Sheila Kuehl, D-Los Angeles)

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Lambda Letters Progress Report

Letters & Messages Collected

April, 2003	20,733 letters & e-mails
In all of 2003	66,225 letters & e-mails

Dollars Spent

April, 2003	\$3,273
In all of 2003	\$16,953

Can You Help?

Please support the very important work of the Lambda Letters Project with your contributions.

Lambda Letters Project

Mission Statement

To promote people of color, feminist, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and HIV/AIDS status advocacy; and to bring people of color, women, lesbians, gays, bisexuals, transgendered and intersex persons, and persons affected by or living with HIV/AIDS into full participation in American society.

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Business-card sized ads (3½"×2") \$10, quarter-page ads \$30, third-page ads \$33, half-page ads \$45, full-page ads \$75, full back-page ad \$100. Deadline for payment and camera-ready copy, along with your name and phone number, is the 25th of each month.

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Have you experienced employment discrimination because of your actual or perceived sexual orientation or because of your age (40 and over), ancestry, color, creed, disability, marital status, medical condition, national origin, race, religion, or sex? Have you been denied family and medical care leave or pregnancy disability leave?

If so, you may register a complaint with the Department of Fair Employment and Housing. In cases of employment discrimination, call the department at (800) 884-1684. In cases of housing discrimination, call (800) 233-3212.

The person answering the phone will schedule an appointment for you at the Department of Fair Employment and Housing Office which is closest to your home or place of employment.

Close an Abuser's Loophole

By Adrienne Lauby, Women's Analyst

In most misdemeanors, the accused individual does not have to appear in court. They can send an attorney to stand in for them. This means a restraining or protective order may be issued to a defendant in a domestic violence case without that person being present. Later, if that defendant violates the court order by, for instance, showing up at the workplace of the protected person, they often claim they were ignorant, that they did not know the terms by which they were ordered to live.

Some of them are even telling the truth.

AB 383 by Rebecca Cohn (D-Campbell) requires a defendant charged with a misdemeanor domestic violence offense or a violation of a domestic violence protective order to be present at any time during the proceedings when ordered by the court, for the purpose of being informed of the conditions of a domestic violence protective order. Abusers will no longer have this "dog ate my homework" excuse. They won't be able to claim innocence of the law.

Consider the interesting situation in Vanuatu, a tropical island located between Fiji and the Solomon Islands. The Fiji Women's Crisis Center publicizes this fact of law: "Your husband does not have the right to hit you for any reason, that is the law. Bride price is a custom payment. When the law of Vanuatu conflicts with a custom practice then the custom practice must stop. So if your husband says that he can beat you because he has paid for you, this is not true under the law even if it used to be true under custom."

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Reduce Health Risks from Shared Needles

By Jamie E. Shauvin, HIV/AIDS Analyst



Please write this month to the members of the California State Assembly and ask them to support SB 774, which authorizes a licensed pharmacist to sell hypodermic needles or syringes to a person without a prescription under specified conditions.

According to the Department of Health Services, California now spends over \$315 million each year on services to people with HIV/AIDS. As of last December, there were 123,819 cumulative cases of HIV/AIDS reported in California since the outbreak of the epidemic. The Department of Health Services also reports that just shy of 20 percent of all cases of HIV infection are related to the sharing of dirty needles by intravenous drug users. Reducing the sharing of dirty needles could have a significant impact on the spread of HIV/AIDS. A reduction in sharing dirty needles would probably do much to lower the state's cost of treating the disease.

Existing law requires a person to properly establish his or her identity in order to purchase a needle or a syringe, and for pharmacists to keep detailed records of nonprescription sales of hypodermic needles and syringes. SB 774 would eliminate both the identity requirement and the requirement that pharmacists keep detailed records of such sales. Introduced by California State Senator John Vasconcellos (D-San Jose), SB 774 was recently reviewed and passed by the Senate Committee on Health and Human Services and the California Senate Appropriations Committee.

SB 774 could do much to slow the spread of serious blood-borne diseases. That, in turn, could greatly reduce the current projected health services costs to the state of caring for people with these diseases. Please write to the California State Assembly and urge its members to approve SB 774. ###

Don't Know Who Represents You?

 Send your request with a stamped, self-addressed envelope and we'll send you a complete list of your elected officials. Or go to www.lambdaleters.org to find out who represents you. 

Make Transgender Rights a Reality, Not a Killed Dream

By Boyce Hinman, Chief Lobbyist

This is a very critical period in the legislative life of AB 196, the bill to ban employment and housing discrimination against transgender people. The bill has been approved by the Assembly and sent to the Senate. Later this month it will be voted on in the Senate Judiciary Committee.

That committee, or the period immediately after a vote in that committee, proved to be the graveyard for two previous bills which sought to ban discrimination against transgender people.

In 2000, AB 2142 passed in the Assembly but failed in the Senate Judiciary Committee by one vote. The Chair of the Committee (then Senator Schiff, D-Pasadena) abstained because he was running for Congress and feared that voting for the bill might kill his chances in the election. If he had voted for the bill, it would have gotten out of committee and might be the law of California today. Schiff got his seat in Congress but transgender people lost their chance at equal rights in California.

In 2001, AB 1649 was approved by the Assembly and actually was approved by the Senate Judiciary Committee. But a few days after the vote, the bill's author dropped the bill at the urging of Governor Davis. Reportedly he promised to fulfill the purpose of the bill (banning discrimination against transgender people) through the administrative process. The governor reneged on his promise, so it became necessary to introduce AB 196 this year.

Please help us get this bill finally through the entire legislative process. For the present, please write to the members of the Senate Judiciary Committee. Urge them to vote for AB 196. For more information about this legislation, please read the Legislative Update or check our website.

###

Prevent Children's Consumption of Alcohol

By Marty Martinez, People of Color Analyst

Excessive alcohol consumption is an important issue contributing to disparities in the health of communities of color. Childhood obesity is another important issue. A new product is being imported to California that will be harmful to children on both counts. The product is an alcohol-infused gelatin shot called Zippers; essentially it is a "Jell-O shot."

There is nothing wrong with adults enjoying this "beverage" but there is a concern that consumption of this product in homes with children may result in a worsening of health disparities. Zippers are 24 proof (12 percent alcohol), with an alcohol content approximately the same as table wine. As they describe on their Web site, www.zippershot.com, "Zippers are packed in brightly colored 8-packs." This packaging closely resembles—and could easily be confused with—single-serving gelatin snacks that are popular among children. This product poses a significant threat to the health and safety of children by combining a child's snack product with high-alcohol content.

As a result of this potential problem, Wilma Chan (D-Oakland) introduced AB 1657, which would limit the sale of gelatin-based alcoholic beverages to bars and other adult establishments.

Alcohol products such as Zippers mask the taste of alcohol with a sweet fruity flavor, which is especially appealing to underage drinkers. A focus group by MADD (Mothers Against Drunk Driving) reported that a deterrent to drinking for students age 9–13 years old is the taste of alcohol.

The National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism reports that alcohol is a factor in the four leading causes of death among persons ages 10–24, which include motor-vehicle crashes, unintentional injuries, homicide, and suicide. Communities of color also suffer: According to the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA), some minority groups suffer more adverse effects from

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June Legislative Update

The legislature is running up against some deadlines. According to its own rules, all bills that didn't incur much expenditure had to be sent to the floor of their house of origin no later than May 9; all bills expecting to result in state government expenses of \$100,000 or more had to go the floor of their house of origin no later than May 30. In either case, they must be approved by their house of origin no later than June 6. Any bills that fail to meet these deadlines are dead.

There are three terms or phrases in this bill list which may be new to you:

Suspense File: This is where bills are put when it is decided to vote on them later. Generally the Senate and Assembly Appropriations Committees put off votes on any bills costing \$100,000 or more until just before the deadline for approval by the committee.

Consent Calendar: Some bills are expected to be supported by everyone when they are voted on. To save time, legislators batch these popular bills in a consent calendar and then vote on all of them at once, rather than having a separate vote on each of them. At voting time legislators do have the option of removing a bill they oppose from the group vote and having a separate vote on that bill.

Reconsideration Granted: Sometimes when a bill is defeated in a committee vote or on the floor of the Senate or Assembly, the bill's author asks permission to bring the bill up for a vote again at another time. If the legislators agree to this, it is called granting reconsideration to the bill.

HIV/AIDS Issues

AB 4 (Wilma Chan, D-Oakland)

Purpose: To declare the intent of the legislature to reinstate the maximum personal income tax rates that were in effect for taxable years beginning on or after January 1, 1996, and ending on or before January 1, 1996, for the taxable years beginning on or after January 1, 2003.

Status: Referred to the Assembly Revenue and Tax Committee for a hearing on May 19.

LLP Position: Support. This will reduce the pressure to cut important health programs.

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Celebrate the Lambda Letters Project 15th Anniversary!

When: July 11 at 7 p.m. "New Date!"

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Legislative Update

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AB 879 (Paul Koretz, D–West Hollywood)

Purpose: To require the Office of AIDS to convene a task force to develop recommendations for the use of post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP) in the general population for the prevention of HIV infection.

Status: Approved by the Assembly Health Committee and referred to the Assembly Appropriations Committee suspense file.

LLP Position: Support.

AB 1324 (Darrell Steinberg, D–Sacramento)

Purpose: To provide that if certain state or local firefighting, law enforcement, or patrol members sustain an injury that meets the definition of a blood-borne infectious disease, and a dependent contracts the blood-borne infectious disease from that person, the dependent may elect to receive worker's compensation for the duration of the disease for all medically necessary healthcare costs. If the dependent elects to receive the award, she or he may not sue the employer.

Status: Approved by the Assembly Appropriations Committee and sent to the Assembly floor for a final vote in that house.

LLP Position: Support.

AB 1363 (Patty Berg, D–Santa Rosa)

Purpose: To authorize cities or counties to develop clean needle and syringe exchange projects that contain prescribed components. This bill would require a participating county or city to assess the project using certain criteria and submit a progress report that takes into consideration data from the assessment.

Status: Approved by the Assembly Health Committee. Referred to the Assembly Appropriations Committee. No hearing date set yet.

LLP Position: Support.

AB 1676 (John Dutra, D–Fremont)

Purpose: To allow testing of blood from a pregnant woman for the presence of HIV. Existing law requires a physician and surgeon to obtain a blood specimen from a pregnant woman before or at the time of delivery. Under the bill, HIV testing would not be required if the pregnant woman has been previously determined to be chronically infected with HIV, as specified. The bill would require certain medical care providers to ensure

that the woman is informed of, among other things, the purpose of testing and that the woman has a right to refuse testing.

Status: Approved by the Assembly Health Committee and sent to the Assembly Appropriations Committee for a hearing on May 21.

LLP Position: Support.

SB 71 (Sheila Kuehl, D–Los Angeles)

Purpose: Among other things, to authorize school districts to provide comprehensive sexual health education, as defined, in kindergarten and grades 1–12, and to require school districts to ensure that all pupils in grades 7–12 receive HIV/AIDS prevention education.

Status: Approved by the Senate Education Committee. Referred to the Senate Appropriations Committee for a hearing on May 19.

LLP Position: Support.

SB 131 (Byron Sher, D–Redwood City)

Purpose: To change the punishments for the first and later charges of possession of a small amount of marijuana.

Status: Approved by the Senate and sent to the Assembly. Not assigned to a committee yet.

LLP Position: Neutral. The bill seems to reduce the number of possession violations which would result in diversion to a drug treatment program.

SB 151 (John Burton, D–San Francisco)

Purpose: To eliminate the extra paperwork required of doctors when prescribing a Schedule II controlled substance (mostly potent pain medications).

Status: Approved by the Senate Public Safety Committee. Referred to the Senate Appropriations Committee for a hearing on May 19.

LLP Position: Support. The bill should reduce the barriers to providing adequate pain management to patients.

SB 774 (John Vasconcellos, D–San Jose)

Purpose: To authorize a licensed pharmacist to sell hypodermic needles or syringes to a person without a prescription under specified conditions, and to authorize a person to possess up to 30 hypodermic needles or syringes if acquired through an authorized source.

These things would facilitate authorized clean needle exchange programs around the state.

Status: Approved by the Senate and sent to the Assembly. Not referred to a committee yet.

LLP Position: Support.

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex Issues

AB 17 (Christine Kehoe, D–San Diego)

Purpose: To prohibit a state agency from entering into a contract for the acquisition of goods or services with a vendor or contractor who does not offer benefits to domestic partner employees, as defined, that are equal to benefits offered to employees with spouses, except as otherwise specified.

Status: Approved by the Assembly Judiciary Committee and put in the Assembly Appropriations Committee suspense file.

LLP Position: Support.

AB 75 (Gloria Negrete McLeod, D–Montclair)

Purpose: To authorize agencies contracting with California's Public Employee Retirement System to provide the survivors of a deceased, retired local safety member an allowance equal to 40 percent of the specified portion of the deceased member's retirement allowance plus 75 percent of the remaining portion of the deceased member's allowance.

Status: Approved by the Assembly Public Employees, Retirement, and Social Security Committee and put in the Assembly Appropriations Committee suspense file.

LLP Position: Support if domestic partners are added to the list of eligible survivors.

AB 76 (Ellen Corbett, D–San Leandro)

Purpose: To make it unlawful for an employer to fail to take immediate and appropriate corrective action to prevent harassment of an employee by an applicant, or a person providing services or by any person, once the employer knows or should have known of this conduct.

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Legislative Update

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Status: Approved by the Assembly and sent to the Senate. Assigned to Senate Judiciary and Senate Labor and Employment Committees, Judiciary Committee first. No hearing date set yet.

LLP Position: Support.

AB 196 (Mark Leno, D–San Francisco)

Purpose: To ban discrimination against transgendered people.

Status: Approved by the Assembly and sent to the Senate Judiciary Committee. No hearing date set yet.

LLP Position: Support.

AB 205 (Jackie Goldberg, D–Los Angeles)

Purpose: To extend the rights and responsibilities of marriage to registered domestic partners, and to revise the process for registering as domestic partners.

Status: Approved by the Assembly Judiciary Committee and put in the Assembly Appropriations Committee suspense file.

LLP Position: Support.

AB 266 (Gene Mullin, D–San Mateo)

Purpose: To authorize the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors to elect to grant domestic partner benefits to the partners of county employees and retirees, through collective bargaining and based on actuarial cost estimates.

Status: Approved by the Assembly and sent to the Senate. Not assigned to a committee yet.

LLP Position: Support.

AB 458 (Judy Chu, D–Monterey Park)

Purpose: To guarantee the rights of a foster child to have fair and equal access to all services, placement, care, treatment, and benefits, and not to be subjected to discrimination or harassment on the basis of actual or perceived race, ethnic group identification, ancestry, national origin, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, or mental or physical disability. Also to require training for administrators, licensing personnel, licensed foster parents, and relative caretakers to include training about this right.

Status: Approved by the Assembly and sent to the Senate. Not assigned to a committee yet.

LLP Position: Support.

AB 1082 (John Laird, D–Santa Cruz)

Purpose: The state government and many local governments are part of the Public Employees Retirement System (PERS). This system allows these governments to offer health benefits to the domestic partners of their employees and retirees if the employees or retirees and their partners meet the state's definition of domestic partnership. Some local governments prior to January 1, 2001, created definitions of domestic partners which differ from the state's definition. AB 1082 would allow these governments to offer health benefits to any persons meeting those local definition of a domestic partner of an employee or retiree of those governments.

Status: Approved by the Assembly and sent to the Senate. Not assigned to a committee yet.

LLP Position: Support.

AB 1327 (Mark Wyland, D–Vista)

Purpose: To roll back part of the domestic partner and family benefits of a bill passed last year. That bill, SB 1661, allowed employees to take paid time off through the state's disability insurance program to care for seriously ill family members, including domestic partners. AB 1327 would exempt employers who employ fewer than 50 people within a 75-mile radius of the worksite of the individual requesting leave. Also, to be eligible, an employee must work at least 1,250 hours during the 12-month period prior to the period for which the individual is requesting the family temporary disability leave.

Status: Failed in Assembly Insurance Committee. Reconsideration granted.

LLP Position: Oppose.

SB 85 (Tom Torlakson, D–Walnut Creek)

Purpose: To allow any county to offer the same death benefits, optional retirement allowances, or survivor's allowances to a registered domestic partner of a county employee or retiree that are currently offered to a spouse of a county employee or retiree. However, for the domestic partner to qualify for the benefits, an affidavit of domestic partnership must be on file with the county one year prior to the employee's retirement or death prior to retirement.

Status: Approved by the Senate and sent to the Assembly Public Employees and Retirement Committee. No hearing date set yet.

LLP Position: Support.

People of Color Issues

AB 25 (Fabian Nunez, D-Los Angeles)

Purpose: To require state agencies to accept as valid identification of a person a photo identification card issued by another nation, as defined, to its citizens or nationals, subject to specified exceptions.

Status: Passed the Assembly and sent to the Senate. Not assigned to a committee yet.

LLP Position: Support.

AB 30 (Keith Richman, R-Granada Hills)

Purpose: To require the state to expand the Healthy Families Program to provide health insurance coverage to employed, childless adults who are uninsured for healthcare coverage and who meet certain household income requirements, subject to approval of a federal waiver and appropriation of state matching funds.

Status: Approved by the Assembly Health Committee. Sent to the Assembly Appropriations Committee. Hearing cancelled by author.

LLP Position: Support.

AB 54 (Jenny Oropeza, D-Carson)

Purpose: To require the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing, in consultation with the State Department of Education, to contract with an independent evaluator to conduct a study of the availability and effectiveness of cultural training for public school teachers and administrators. The bill would require the study to focus on 10 culturally diverse schools that reflect the diverse demography and geography of

California and would prescribe criteria for selecting those schools.

Status: Approved by the Assembly Education Committee and referred to the Assembly Appropriations Committee suspense file.

LLP Position: Support.

AB 174 (Thomas Calderon, D-Montebello)

Purpose: To help mitigate the effect of increases in community college fees. Governor Davis has proposed more than doubling the fee per unit of credit for community colleges. This bill states that if community college fees are increased, only the first ten units will be payable at the new rates; any additional credits will be free.

Status: Referred to the Assembly Committee on Higher Education for a hearing on April 22. Hearing cancelled by author.

LLP Position: Support. People on limited income depend on low-cost community colleges to receive their college education, which increases their chance of getting good-paying jobs.

AB 177 (Jenny Oropeza, D-Carson)

Purpose: To require that voters pamphlets include a statement setting forth various specified rights of voters during an election, including the right to get election materials in a language other than English. The secretary of state would be required to print posters in English and Spanish and other languages, setting forth the list of rights, and distribute the posters to county elections officials for display by precinct officials at their polling places.

Status: Approved by the Assembly Elections, Redistricting, and Constitutional Amendments Committee. Referred to the Assembly Appropriations Committee suspense file.

LLP Position: Support.

AB 203 (Sally Lieber, D-San Jose)

Purpose: To require the state to conduct an annual study of physician reimbursement rates in medical assistance programs in *the five states, other than California, that have the largest number of residents*, and to submit an annual report to the appropriate committees of the legislature on the



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Legislative Update

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study.

Status: Passed by the Assembly Health Committee. Referred to the Assembly Appropriations Committee. Put on the Appropriations Committee's suspense file.

LLP Position: Support. The concept is to see if we should adjust the rates paid to doctors for caring for Medi-Cal patients.

AB 231 (Darrel Steinberg, D-Sacramento)

Purpose: To help people qualify for the CalWORKs and Food Stamp Programs which serve limited-income people in California. Because their assets are reviewed to see whether they qualify for the programs, this bill states that a car owned by someone should not be considered when determining whether that person has few-enough assets to qualify for the programs. Would also require each county welfare department, to the maximum extent allowable under federal law, to provide transitional food stamp benefits to households terminating their participation in the CalWORKs program for a period of five months. Also would eliminate a fingerprint electronic ID system now used by the food stamp programs. Studies show that this system is ineffective in eliminating duplicate applications.

Status: Approved by the Assembly Human Services Committee. Referred to the Assembly Appropriations Committee suspense file.

LLP Position: Support.

AB 292 (Leland Yee, D-San Francisco)

Purpose: To provide that a state or local governmental agency, or a public or private agency supported by state funding, shall not use any child, or permit any child to be used, as a translator or interpreter in any matter involving the business or function of that agency except

as specified. Also to require each agency that receives state funding to have available for inspection an established procedure for translation services that provide competent translation services.

Status: Approved by the Assembly Business and Professions Committee. Referred to the Assembly Appropriations Committee suspense file.

LLP Position: Support.

AB 309 (Judy Chu, D-Monterey Park)

Purpose: Existing law requires a person in a trade or business who negotiates contracts primarily in Spanish to deliver a Spanish copy of the contract to the other party prior its execution. Failure to do so can void the contract. This bill extends these provisions to contracts negotiated in Chinese, Tagalog, Vietnamese, and Korean. Only becomes operative if SB 146 is also passed.

Status: Approved by the Assembly Banking and Finance Committee and sent to the Assembly floor for a final vote in that house.

LLP Position: Support, but would prefer the bill to cover all languages.

AB 522 (Manny Diaz, D-San Jose)

Purpose: To require local governments to accept for purposes of personal identification an identification card issued by the Mexican Consulate Office, to the extent permitted by federal law, the same as a driver's license or identification card issued by the Department of Motor Vehicles except when possession of a valid driver's license is required by law.

Status: Approved by the Assembly. Referred to the Senate Public Safety Committee. No hearing date set yet.

LLP Position: Support.

AB 570 (Judy Chu, D-Monterey Park)

Purpose: Existing law requires people engaged in a garment manufacturing business to register with the state labor commissioner and pay a registration fee. Part of the fee goes into a special fund to compensate garment workers who aren't paid their wages, expenses, or benefits by a garment manufacturer, jobber, contractor, or subcontractor. This bill would authorize the state to use *all* the special funds every year to

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compensate workers who have been harmed.

Status: Approved by the Assembly Labor and Employment Committee and referred to the Assembly Appropriations Committee suspense file.

LLP Position: Support.

AB 801 (Manny Diaz, D-San Jose)

Purpose: To create a voluntary program for physicians. It would develop voluntary classes to teach foreign languages to interested physicians, and teach physicians about cultural practices and beliefs that impact healthcare. The bill would reduce the barriers to healthcare faced by many minority Californians.

Status: Approved by the Assembly Health Committee and sent to the Assembly Appropriations Committee. No hearing date set yet.

LLP Position: Support.

AB 858 (Jackie Goldberg, D-Los Angeles)

Purpose: To generally prohibit public schools from using certain specified terms as a school or athletic team name, mascot, or nickname.

Status: Approved by the Assembly Education Committee and referred to the Assembly Appropriations Committee suspense file.

LLP Position: Support.

AB 1278 (Jerome Horton, D-Inglewood)

Purpose: To require high schools to offer courses of study relating to the economics of higher education and instruction on completing forms relating to student financial aid.

Status: Approved by the Assembly Education Committee and referred to the Assembly Appropriations Committee suspense file.

LLP Position: Support.

AJR 3 (Jerome Horton, D-Inglewood)

Purpose: To urge Congress and the president of the United States to repeal a provision of the 1998 amendments to the federal Higher Education Act of 1965 that denies or delays access to financial aid based upon convictions for drug-related offenses.

Status: Approved by the Assembly Higher Education Committee and sent to the Assembly floor for a final vote in that house.

LLP Position: Support.

AB 1657 (Wilma Chan, D-Oakland)

Purpose: To prohibit the sale, offering for sale, distribution, or import into this state of any *prepackaged* gelatin-based (like Jell-O) alcoholic beverage unless it is sold, offered for sale, or intended to be sold in a business establishment that prohibits the presence of persons under 21 years of age on its premises.

Status: Approved by the Assembly and sent to the Senate. Not assigned to a committee yet.

LLP Position: Support.

AJR 4 (Dennis Mountjoy R-Monrovia)

Purpose: The National Slave Memorial Act (HR 196) was introduced in the House of Representatives on January 7, 2003, to authorize the secretary of the interior to establish a memorial to slavery in the District of Columbia. This bill would urge that this bill be passed by Congress and signed by the president.

Status: Failed in the Assembly Judiciary Committee. Granted reconsideration. The author can ask for another vote.

LLP Position: Support.

AJR 30 (Carol Liu, D-Pasadena)

Purpose: To condemn the statements made by Congressman Howard Coble regarding the internment of Japanese-Americans during World War II (he said the internment was OK), to urge him to apologize, and to encourage him to resign from the chairmanship of the Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism, and Homeland Security of the Judiciary Committee of the United States House of Representatives.

Status: In Assembly Rules Committee. Expected to go to the Assembly floor soon.

LLP Position: Support.

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Legislative Update

Continued from page 11

SB 17 (Martha Escutia, D-Norwalk)

Purpose: To amend the laws relating to property taxes on nonresidential commercial and industrial property to eliminate loopholes that have allowed such properties to evade reassessment upon sale of the property.

Status: Approved by the Senate Revenue and Tax Committee and sent to the Senate Appropriations Committee for a hearing on May 19.

LLP Position: Support. This bill would increase tax revenues and reduce the need to cut spending on health and social services programs.

SB 24 (Liz Figueroa, D-Fremont)

Purpose: To require the Child Health and Disability Prevention (CHDP) program to confirm the eligibility of, and issue a Medi-Cal card to, any child under the age of one who appears to be eligible for Medi-Cal. Would also require the state to adopt a process for accelerated enrollment in Medi-Cal for children under 18. This bill would provide another door into Medi-Cal for poor children and eliminate the need for them to go to another office to apply for Medi-Cal.

Status: Approved by the Senate Health and Human Services Committee and referred to the Senate Appropriations Committee suspense file.

LLP Position: Support.

SB 36 (Wes Chesbro, D-Santa Rosa)

Purpose: To provide that federally qualified health center services and rural health clinic services, as defined, are covered benefits under the Medi-Cal program, to be reimbursed to providers on a per-visit basis. The bill would also provide for various requirements pertaining to the reimbursement of these services.

Status: Approved by the Senate and sent to the Assembly Health Committee. No hearing date set yet.

LLP Position: Support.

SB 43 (Gil Cedillo, D-Los Angeles)

Purpose: To provide an easy way for people to contribute to the Emergency Food Assistance Program Fund by submitting extra money with taxes owed to the state each year. The bill would permit this until January 1, 2009.

Status: Approved by the Senate. Referred to the Assembly Revenue and Tax Committee. No hearing date set yet.

LLP Position: Support.

SB 57 (John Burton, D-San Francisco)

Purpose: To adjust the hourly minimum wage on January 1, 2004, and annually thereafter, to maintain employee purchasing power.

Status: Approved by the Senate Labor and Industrial Relations Committee. Referred to the Senate Appropriations Committee suspense file.

LLP Position: Support.

SB 101 (Wes Chesbro, D-Santa Rosa)

Purpose: To require most healthcare service plans and disability insurance policies to provide coverage for the treatment of medically necessary substance-related disorders, excluding caffeine-related disorders, on the same basis as they provide coverage for any other medical condition.

Status: Referred to the Senate Insurance Committee for a vote on April 30. Hearing was cancelled by committee.

LLP Position: Support.



SB 142 (Dierdre Alpert, D-San Diego)

Purpose: To require the state to establish a process for county Medi-Cal eligibility staff members to authorize eligibility for children in the Healthy Families Program if the child meets the program's eligibility requirements. Currently county Medi-Cal staff are not doing this.

Status: Approved by the Senate Insurance Committee. Referred to the Senate Appropriations Committee for a hearing on May 19.

LLP Position: Support. This bill would create an additional gate through which children could be enrolled in the Healthy Families Program.

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SB 146 (Martha Escutia, D–Norwalk)

Purpose: To help non-English-speaking people understand business contracts they sign. Current law requires business people who negotiate certain contracts primarily in Spanish to deliver a Spanish translation of the contract to other parties prior to execution of the contract. This bill adds that the Spanish document must include a translation of every term and condition in that contract.

Status: Approved by the Senate and referred to the Assembly. Not referred to a committee yet.

LLP Position: Support, but we would like other languages added to the bill.

SB 148 (Tom Torlakson, D–Walnut Creek)

Purpose: To encourage the building of low-cost housing and an end to urban sprawl. Currently some of the property taxes on housing goes to the state and some to the counties. This bill states that if a county uses zoning laws to encourage the building of housing that can be served by existing infrastructure (sewers, electrical systems, and so on), *and* if the county invests in low-cost housing, the county can keep all the property taxes generated by that property.

Status: Introduced. Not referred to a committee yet.

LLP Position: Support.

SB 853 (Martha Escutia, D–Norwalk)

Purpose: To require that healthcare service plans in California offer access to language assistance and culturally competent health care services.

Status: Approved by the Senate Insurance Committee. Referred to Senate Appropriations Committee for a vote on May 19.

LLP Position: Support.

SB 921 (Sheila Kuehl, D–Los Angeles)

Purpose: To provide affordable healthcare for all Californians, by establishing a “single payer” health plan.

Status: Approved the Senate Health and Human Services Committee and referred to the Senate Appropriations Committee. No hearing date set yet.

LLP Position: Support.

SBX1 1 (Charles Poochigian, R–Fresno)

Purpose: To suspend all bills relating to worker’s compensation, labor standards, and agricultural labor relations that were approved last year, until the governor issues a proclamation declaring that the California economy has fully recovered from the recession that began in 2000.

Status: Referred to the Senate Labor and Industrial Relations Committee. No hearing date set yet.

LLP Position: Watch with concern. This may invalidate bills of concern to people of color.

SBX1 3 (Martha Escutia, D–Norwalk)

Purpose: To amend the laws relating to property taxes on nonresidential commercial and industrial property to eliminate loopholes that have allowed such properties to evade reassessment upon sale of the property.

Status: Has not yet been assigned to a committee.

LLP Position: Support. This bill would increase tax revenues and reduce the need to cut spending on health and social services programs.

Women’s Issues

AB 23 (Joe Nation, D–San Rafael)

Purpose: To require healthcare providers to accept and support specified rights of mammography patients, and require patients to accept specified responsibilities.

Status: Approved by the Assembly Appropriations Committee and sent to the floor of the Assembly for a final vote in that house.

LLP Position: Support.

AB 134 (Rebecca Cohn, D–Campbell)

Purpose: In certain circumstances, to increase the penalty for domestic violence if the accused had been convicted previously of domestic violence.

Status: Approved by the Assembly Public Safety Committee. Referred to the Assembly Appropriations Committee and placed on its suspense file.

LLP Position: Support.

AB 145 (Alan Lowenthal, D–Long Beach)

Purpose: To require probation officers to receive initial and refresher training in domestic violence.

Status: Approved by the Assembly Public Safety

Legislative Update

Continued from page 13

Committee. Referred to the Assembly Appropriations Committee and placed on its suspense file.

LLP Position: Support.

AB 183 (Joe Nation, D—San Rafael)

Purpose: To include licensed marriage and family therapist and licensed clinical social workers services within the scope of Medi-Cal covered benefits, to the extent that federal matching funds are available for those services.

Status: Approved by the Assembly Health Committee and referred to the Assembly Appropriations Committee suspense file.

LLP Position: Support.

AB 184 (Alan Lowenthal, D—Long Beach)

Purpose: To allow the driver's registration public records of the victims of domestic violence and stalking to be kept confidential.

Status: Approved by the Assembly Transportation Committee. Referred to the Assembly Appropriations Committee and placed on its suspense file.

LLP Position: Support.

AB 367 (Paul Koretz, D—West Hollywood)

Purpose: To establish a state program to inform pregnant women, new mothers, and healthcare professionals of certain postpartum mood and anxiety disorders.

Status: Passed by the Assembly Health Committee and referred to the Assembly Appropriations Committee suspense file.

LLP Position: Support.

AB 383 (Rebecca Cohn, D—Campbell)

Purpose: Existing law states that a person charged with domestic violence must be present for arraignment and sentencing. This bill states that such a person must be present at *any* time during a trial to be sure to hear the terms of any protective order issued by the court. This would prevent the defendant from later violating a protective order and claiming he or she didn't know the terms of the order.

Status: Passed by the Assembly. Referred to the Senate Public Safety Committee. No hearing date set yet.

LLP Position: Support.

AB 506 (Bill Maze, R—Visalia)

Purpose: To require the police in sexual assault cases to test the victim's urine to see if the victim had been drugged by the attacker, unless the victim objects to the test.

Status: Approved by the Assembly Appropriations Committee suspense file.

LLP Position: Support.

AB 898 (Judy Chu, D—Monterey Park)

Purpose: To require a law enforcement agency investigating a felony sex offense, upon the request of the victim, to promptly inform the victim of the status of the DNA testing of the rape kit evidence or other crime scene evidence from the victim's case, as specified. The victim would have the right to be informed whether or not a DNA profile was obtained from the testing of the rape kit evidence or other crime scene evidence from their case, whether that information had been entered into the Department of Justice Data Bank of case evidence, and whether or not there is a match between the DNA profile developed from the rape kit evidence or other crime scene evidence and a DNA profile contained in the Department of Justice Convicted Offender DNA Database.

Status: Approved by Assembly Public Safety Committee. Referred to Assembly Appropriations Committee. No hearing date set yet.

LLP Position: Support.

AB 1488 (Patricia Bates, R—Laguna Niguel)

Purpose: To declare that a hearing for a request for release on bail must be held before a defendant charged with certain crimes is to be released. The charges include that the defendant made threats to kill, engaged in violence against, or visited the residence or workplace of a person protected from the defendant by a restraining order.

Status: Approved by the Assembly and referred to the Senate. Not assigned to a committee yet.

LLP Position: Support.

AJR 2 (Hannah-Beth Jackson, D—Santa Barbara)

Purpose: To tell Congress and the president of the United States to stand firm in their resolve to uphold the intent and substance of the Supreme Court's decision in *Roe v. Wade* relating to reproductive rights, and to

encourage all Americans to participate in the national celebration, "Celebrating 30 Years of *Roe v. Wade*," in recognition of that decision's historic importance in promoting women's rights.

Status: Approved by the Assembly. Sent to the Senate. Assigned to the Senate Judiciary Committee. No hearing date set yet.

LLP Position: Support.

SB 664 (Sheila Kuehl, D-Los Angeles)

Purpose: To require the State Department of Social Services to allocate an unspecified percentage of the marriage promotion moneys in the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Fund to county welfare agencies for domestic violence services for CalWORKs recipients, as specified. Also to require the department to allocate to the Office of Women's Health in the State Department of Health Services an unspecified percentage of the marriage promotion moneys in the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Fund to develop and implement a public education campaign that raises awareness about the health consequences of domestic violence.

Status: Approved by the Senate Health and Human Services Committee. Referred to the Senate Appropriations Committee suspense file.

LLP Position: Support.

SB 689 (Deborah Ortiz, D-Sacramento)



Purpose: To establish a program for testing breast milk in at least three racially, economically, and geographically diverse communities to assess community health in those areas.

Status: Approved by the Senate Health and Human Services Committee. Referred to the Senate Appropriations Committee for a hearing on May 19.

LLP Position: Support.

###

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Women's Issue

Continued from page 3

We tend to think that the U.S. is a more civilized society than those with bride prices, arranged marriages, and dowries. However, when a woman (or man, for that matter) is killed or injured by someone that the police know threatened repeatedly, our civilization does not look as advanced as we'd like.

By exploding the excuse of "I paid for you, so I can do what I want," the women of Vanuatu are taking a step to civilize their society. AB 383 will civilize our society by exploding the excuse of "I didn't know I wasn't allowed to." Abusers will know exactly what they can and cannot do.

Please write your state senator in support of this important piece of legislation.

###

People of Color Issue

Continued from page 4

alcohol consumption, abuse, and alcoholism than do other populations. Read more about that here:

<http://snurl.com/ldgw>

Under current law, gelatin-based alcohol beverages are subject to the same laws and regulations as other alcoholic beverages. The California Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control has no legal authority to prevent importation or legal sale of these products at any licensed establishment.

AB 1657 would limit the sale of gelatin-based alcohol beverages to business establishments prohibiting persons under 21 years of age on their premises. Thus the only businesses allowed to sell gelatin-based alcohol products would be bars and clubs where the products would be consumed on-site. This would prevent the purchase of multiple-pack containers brought into private homes where children and underage youth could easily avail themselves of the product, either intentionally or by mistake.

This bill has passed the Assembly. Please write a letter to your state senator in support of the bill.

###

LLP Treasurer Issues Challenge

Continued from page 1

nars and offers a number of other fundraising training opportunities. It also offers mentoring to new fundraisers who need advice on how to design and implement an effective fundraising plan. Board member Allan Robin agreed to be our liaison with AFP and to work with a mentor in designing and implementing our plan.

Raising an additional \$2,700 per month will not be easy, so we eagerly invite anyone with fundraising experience to step forward and help us meet that goal. Even people without fundraising experience can help. There are many things that don't take great skill, such as stuffing envelopes, which can contribute to a successful campaign.

Please take a few minutes to think about what Lambda Letters does for you and for the community. Are our services really important to you? Do the goals we work toward have a more than casual importance to the community? Just how much are we worth to you?

Money is needed to pay for those services. If you feel that what we do is important, please send us a contribution. But also think seriously about volunteering for our fundraising program. Your help could bring in far more financial support in total than you could ever individually afford. If you would like to help us out, please send us a note with your signed letters, call me at (916) 728-1261, or e-mail me at LambdaLP@aol.com. ###

In-Kind Donations Sought

Lambda Letters survives through the generous support of many of its members. If you would like to help LLP in ways other than giving money, consider donating in-kind goods and services instead. Lambda Letters needs Microsoft Access 2000, Adobe PageMaker 6.5 or later, Microsoft Office 2000 Professional, laser printer (Ethernet-ready), toner cartridges for an HP 2100 printer, and frequent flyer miles. Examples of in-kind services could include creating and editing a score card or preparing mailings. Please contact Boyce Hinman at LambdaLP@aol.com for more information. ###

LLP's Sizzling Pace

Continued from page 1

*"The more than 200,000 letters per year that your members send to legislators play an important part in the legislative process."
(Assemblymember Darrell Steinberg, D-Sacramento)*

*"I would like to extend special recognition to your organization for your participation and continual impact on important legislation. It is through your hard work and continuous efforts that your opinions and voices are able to be heard on issues that affect our community."
(Senator John Vasconcellos, D-San Jose)*



Many of the bills we work on together are of direct benefit to you. Are you gay or lesbian? We supported AB 1001, the bill which bans employment and housing discrimination against lesbians and gays. Are you transgender? We are fighting for legislation to ban discrimination against your community. Are you a woman on limited income? We have supported many bills for publicly funded breast cancer testing and treatment. Are you an undocumented immigrant who went to grade school and high school here? We supported the law that now allows you to attend California's public colleges and universities at the in-state tuition rate, rather than the much higher out-of-state tuition rate that was previously the case.

Many other bills we support benefit the communities we serve at large. Legislators tell us that what we do is effective, but the more letters and messages we deliver, the more effective they are.


Do you want more legislation that benefits and protects you and your community? Tell others about Lambda Letters and get them to join. Do you have friends who are not members of Lambda Letters? What are you waiting for? Tell them about us. Get them to join!

###

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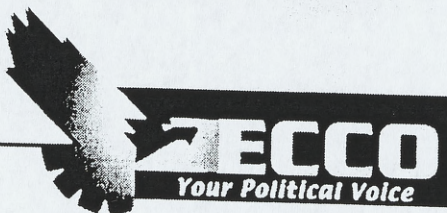


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